

Introduction: Human Security, Stability and Cooperation: Basic Conditions for Co-Development?

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Introduction

In consequence of the so-called refugee and migration crisis, Europe has transformed its international relations with the Maghreb. The two-decade long efforts of building a region tying the two sides of the Mediterranean have been undermined by the responses to the massive flows of asylum seekers and undocumented migrants and to the threat of transnational terrorism.

Empirically, the security dynamics of the Maghreb and the Sahel are intertwined. For both Tunisian and Malian citizens, security in Libya has become an issue of domestic security policy and concern. Citizens from North Africa have joined the ranks of ISIS as foreign combatants. A smaller percentage from the Sahel region have followed suit.

Furthermore, the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean have been connected throughout the history of international relations in this region beyond the security dimension. Indeed, North Africa and Southern Europe are interconnected in various dimensions, their histories are entangled and their futures will be the outcomes of their relations and responses to the common political, economic, social and security challenges they face. The leaderships and civil societies in this region will make history in their responses to the current security predicament. Whether their futures will be forged through cooperation, conflict and/or cross-cultural exchange cannot be anticipated and remains contingent. What is clear is that their futures will be the outcomes of their relations and will be co-constitutive.

The paper seeks to address a set of questions. What should the EU political strategy prioritise in its quest to foster a human security approach towards the Mediterranean? How to ensure that stability and cooperation do not pose dilemmas in terms of contributing to a more just regional society? How to accommodate region building with the trajectories of the 5+5 Dialogue societies in the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean?

The first part of this paper will consider the Mediterranean world in terms of the cultural interface between European and North African civilisations. The aim of this section is to understand to what extent the commonalities between the two worlds have been consolidated or whether differences between the two worlds have been widening.

The second part of this paper will consider the dilemmas of region building in terms of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the external security challenges the European Union member states have brought to the forefront of public debate.



The paper rests on two assumptions that will guide the analysis and the final recommendations.

Firstly, regardless of Europe's strategy and perspectives, and other external actors, the responses to the current security predicament will be local and will be locally and regionally negotiated by a myriad of actors, both state and non-state (Hüsken & Klute, 2015). Secondly, the military instrument alone will not bring about stability. Indeed, military action should only be a minor component of a larger political strategy (Ellis, 2004, p. 464; Bayart, 2017).

The Mediterranean World and the Cultural Interface between European and North African Civilisations

The Mediterranean has been the space par excellence where the ideas of the East met those of the West; it is a space of intersection between the Islamic and Christian worlds. Indeed, migration has brought the Islamic dimension back into European life (Coker, 1998, p. 102). Camus used the word tolerance to characterise the Mediterranean world (Hüsken & Klute, 2015, p. 101). However, the challenges and dilemmas to build and accommodate different expectations in multicultural societies within Europe have led to measures of entrenchment and closure rather than to openness and accommodation. The Muslim citizens within Europe and in the West have been further divided. The version of Islam they profess and practise will determine whether they are treated as “good” or bad “Muslim” (Mamdani, 2012). In addition, this distinction is increasingly dependent upon their country of origin and their willingness to discard public demonstrations of faith. The asylum crisis in Europe cannot be fully understood without bearing in mind EU member states' various approaches to integrating citizens with different origins, ethnicity and professing different confessions. It is one of the policy areas where the domestic and the international are intertwined and the dilemmas of social engineering multicultural and multiconfessional societies have led to the reassertion of national identities in mutually exclusive templates. What are the orientations towards citizens trying to gain a right of access to Europe and/or the West? This is the object of the next section.

Beyond Faith as a Passport

The evolution of domestic and supra-national legislation within the EU conditioning the public display of religious symbols in public spaces and in the working environment cannot be separated from the debate around European Muslim female citizens' determination to wear the veil. The European Court of Justice's ruling of 27 March 2017

is the culmination of this trend legitimising employers' right to determine whether employees are authorised (or not) to use the veil, crosses and/or other religious symbols. The tolerance and respect for religious freedom that are the basis of secular political systems are being undermined by the responses to terrorist attacks perpetrated by militant Islamist combatants on EU soil, pledging allegiance to ISIS.

In the US, one's faith and/or country of origin is a condition of granting entry or not depending on where one's home of origin is; this seems to be the case under the Trump administration's Presidential executive orders 13769 (of 27 January 2017, revoked by the second executive order) and the subsequent one of 6 March 2017. The place of birth, regardless of dual citizenship (in the first executive order US citizens and holders of other passports who originally came from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Libya and Syria were targeted), combined with the religion he or she professes will eventually condition entry in the US from 16 March 2017. Despite the change of rhetoric in the second order, the association between the countries under scrutiny and the religion which much of their citizens profess – Islam – cannot be dissociated.

I also use faith as a passport metaphorically to describe the crossing conditions of both those who succeed and fail in reaching Europe via the Mediterranean. In this regard, concerns over order, stability and security have taken precedence over human rights, justice and solidarity. The asylum and migration crisis continues unabated and triggers divisions between Europeans and between Europeans and Africans. In the short term, this crisis widens the gulf between regions, creates resentment and hampers the long-term goal of co-development. The securitisation of human mobility across this region is of recent breed. The mobility and the movements across the Sahel and the Maghreb with the purpose of reaching Europe have contributed to the intertwinement of the two regions' security dynamics. The insistence on the academic division between the two sub-regions (North Africa/Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa/Sahel) obscures and obstructs the need to find multilateral responses to transnational problems and challenges that enhance the triangular relationship between the Sahel, the Maghreb and Europe.

The Mediterranean Triangle: Southern Europe, the Maghreb/North Africa and the Sahel

European media coverage and public opinion have tended to look at Africa as a source. Firstly, as a source of valuable resources, such as minerals and energy in the more recent narrative of Africa as the rising continent (Bunce, Franks, & Patterson, 2017). Secondly, as a source of insecurity in terms of growing flows of irregular/undocumented migrants,

epidemics and conflicts. Indeed, Europeans have tended to look at Africans out of material interest and/or fear. These representations have nourished a subordination of human rights and justice to order. Europeans show solidarity towards the Africans that they perceive as victims of poor health provision/care and poor governance when it comes to epidemics and conflict. Paradoxically, the flows of migrants and asylum seekers trigger either indifference or resistance, which is being capitalised on by political parties across Europe. Europe stands as the saviour and the fortress.

For Africans, their representations of Europe trigger the determination to face the risks of an uncertain journey of unpredictable outcomes. Indeed, in 2016 alone 4,500 people died or disappeared trying to cross the Mediterranean (Amnesty International [AI], 2014). Borders as a key element of national sovereignty have waned within the EU in parallel with their reinforcement towards the non-EU space. Geography has reasserted itself against those who believed the international system was heading towards a borderless world. Those who have made it to the other side of the Mediterranean did so with Faith as their passport.

The northern and southern Mediterranean's shores, the Maghreb and the Sahel cannot escape their geographical predicament; these three sub-regions' security dynamics are intertwined. Closing the borders and erecting walls will enhance identity and cultural differences and will prevent the emergence of an adequate response that considers the global, regional and local political arenas. In addition, it will work against the EU's long-term goal of region building. This recognition is critical to developing a human security approach to address the security challenges within the Mediterranean.

The Mediterranean Region and the Commitment to Human Security

In the context of the EU, since Javier Solana's era human security's visibility has declined. Solana's successors as High Representatives, Catherine Ashton and Federica Mogherini, have not managed to keep it high on the agenda. In the recently launched EU Global Strategy for Foreign and Security Policy, human security is mentioned four times (European Union, 2016). The words cooperation and security run throughout the document.

The section on the EU's approach to the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa mentions several issues that correspond to a human security approach; specifically, border security, trafficking, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, water and food security, energy and

climate, infra-structure and disaster management. However, since the so-called “Arab and African” uprisings, the daring idea of human security has become a taboo subject in the corridors of the African Union (AU).

Beyond the narrative of the need to promote a human security approach, the asylum and refugee crisis highlights the need to re-enforce this approach in relation with other frameworks, namely human rights and human development. It is imperative to bring together political, ethical and normative dimensions and look beyond Eurocentric perspectives of international relations. The response to the migration crisis across the Mediterranean overlooks human rights and exclusively focuses on border control and mobility prevention to the detriment of people/humans. The criticism of human rights-focused civil society groups and transnational actors such as NGOs to this policy response converge on the recognition of one issue: the de-humanisation of the “other” (Mayblin, 2017). The human cost of fortress Europe does not go unnoticed but remains silenced in its external relations (Al, 2014). It is against this background that the next section will consider the European Neighbourhood Policy.

The EU, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and External Security Challenges

The EU embodied a set of norms, such as human rights/justice/democracy and transnationalism or cosmopolitanism. More recently, however, we have witnessed the subordination of human rights and democracy to stability and order, at the peril of compromising the long-term goal of contributing to more just societies on the two shores of the Mediterranean. Indeed, the EU in its political strategy towards its neighbours faces the challenge of reconciling democracy and security.

Towards the Future: Migrant Crisis and Human Mobility

At the current juncture relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean are central to our understanding of the likely evolution of the responses to the migration and refugees crisis. The movements across the Mediterranean appear as part of another crisis: that of the international refugee regime (Hammerstad, 2010) which preceded it. This section aims to look at migration beyond the crisis' narrative and analytical lens.

In contrast to conventional wisdom, population movements and human mobility are not only a source of instability but also a source of prosperity for receiving countries and for the extended family in the countries of origin. This happens to be the case through diaspora formation linkages with the homeland due to remittances and other connections.

Migration has been both criminalised and since 9/11 securitised. The increase in people flows has contributed to the rise of fears related to the eventual intrusion of radicalised militants amongst irregular migrants and asylum seekers. Most of the perpetrators of the series of recent attacks on European soil were not refugees and/or undocumented migrants. In these attacks from France to Belgium, Germany, the UK and Spain, most of the perpetrators were either European citizens or non-EU citizens but residents in the EU (Te-Sat. EUROPOL, 2017, p. 6; Mújica, 2017, p. 10 and p. 14). Specifically, the attacks against fellow citizens at the Parisian concert hall Bataclan, as well as the Parisian Restaurants and Stadium, Brussels Airport and Metro, Nice's Promenade des Anglais, Berlin's Hospital, and other attacks in Wurzburg, Munich, Ansbach, Reutlingen, the French church at St. Saint-Étienne-du-Rouvray, Berlin's Christmas market, Westminster, Manchester Arena, London Bridge and Borough Market and Barcelona's Ramblas are not only the acts and scenes of a long tragedy but the shocking manifestation of a deeper crisis in multicultural societies and in solidarity across and within regional international societies. However, we have witnessed the emergence of the securitisation of human mobility tying up international migration and transnational terrorism. The insistence on this approach will further compromise the space for dialogue and cultural interface between the two sides of the Mediterranean. The externalisation of the gate-keeping function to the European neighbours on the southern shore of the Mediterranean militates against the goal of contributing to the region's stability. In the context of the Foreign Affairs Ministerial Declaration of the 5+5 Dialogue from Marseilles, the key constructive role that diaspora formations should play in changing the current misrepresentations and prejudices against the societies on the two sides of the Mediterranean is notable. The critical juncture begs rapprochement and re-engagement to foster trans-continental tolerance and solidarity. A changing approach to migration and a de-securitisation move towards human mobility are basic premises to region building and co-development.

Transnational Terrorism and Radicalisation: between Prevention and Counter-Radicalisation

At this critical juncture both northern and southern Mediterranean countries have experienced security challenges in relation to transnational militant Islamist movements, either as sources of origin for so-called religious combatants (Mujahedeen) and/or the target of terrorist attacks. This threat challenges both the EU and AU, as well as the 5+5 Dialogue countries, the Union for the Mediterranean and the Arab Maghreb Union. The presence and expansion of several types of transnational militant Islamist movements in Europe and Africa, namely Al-Qaeda and ISIS and their competition for regional affiliates in North Africa and in the Sahel (and beyond in the Horn of Africa and in the lac Tchad basin), demands international solidarity and cooperation in preventing and responding

to radicalisation. In the face of this security challenge the intertwining of the security dynamics of Europe, North Africa and the Sahel are striking. The member states' strategies to counter radicalisation need to be forged in the long term and based on a trans-regional approach. ISIS' capacity to mobilise adherents on both shores of the Mediterranean is unlikely to wane without rendering vulnerable groups resilient to radicalisation. The Foreign Affairs Ministerial meeting of the 5+5 Dialogue held in Marseilles on 28 October 2016 has rightly highlighted the need to expand international relations between the societies on the two sides of the Mediterranean encompassing the human, political, economic and cultural dimensions. The vision for the future generations is dependent upon the present achievements in terms of trans-continental solidarity in preventing and responding to radicalisation. For the purposes of the present paper, the domestic and transnational security challenges of Libya and the Sahel are a key priority among the several conflicts identified in the Marseilles conclusions. Furthermore, the document elects as key priorities: target-training for youth and insertion into the job market through the ENP and/or through the Union for the Mediterranean. In this regard, the political strategy is to favour multilateralism within this region and to escape trends towards applying EU bilateral approaches on a case-by-case basis. The Euro-Mediterranean University of Fez, the HOMERe programme to recruit and Med4Jobs have the potential to render vulnerable groups more resilient to radicalisation through the creation of opportunities beyond the risky route of irregular migration or precarious jobs.

Concluding Remarks

Historically, the Mediterranean region has functioned as a bridge between Europe and Africa. The refugee and migrant crisis has transformed the Maghreb into a buffer region which mediates pressures from Sub-Saharan Africa. However, this crisis cannot be dissociated from a much deeper and more meaningful crisis: that of the European political project. The latter shows us that globalisation and nationalism are not progressing necessarily in opposite directions. The externalisation of the EU's borders advances hand in hand with its partnership with North Africa, revolving more around guaranteeing the former's energy security and the latter's stability. Paradoxically, economic globalisation and the reinforcement of national sovereignty in the face of the refugee and migration crisis advance in a mutually reinforcing fashion, shaking hands and breaking alternative political projects based on multiculturalism.

Unless the Marseilles recommendations of the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from the 5+5 Dialogue's countries of October 2016 are implemented, the widening gap



in terms of cultural interface will undermine the two-decade long effort of building a Mediterranean region.

The overemphasis on the military response to the refugee and migrant crisis and to the transnational terrorist threat will backfire against the long-term goal of contributing to stability in the region. Indeed, the militarisation of the current strategy towards the southern Mediterranean and the Sahel has led to the subordination of human rights and democracy to stability and security. Authoritarian leaderships have not escaped the temptation to use anti-terrorism legislation to suppress opposition leaders and, hence, under the aegis of the struggle against terrorism the extant public space of opposition has been further compromised. Within the EU and the West, the growing discrimination of citizens based on the religion they profess will nourish militant Islamist movements' capacity to capitalise on the resentment of vulnerable groups in Muslim groups within Western societies. Transnational militant Islamist movements, such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS, are not likely to be the last demonstration of political fundamentalism masqueraded under a religious narrative.

In the long run, the subordination of justice to order will contribute to less resilient societies on both shores of the Mediterranean and the current risks and security threats are not likely to wither away.

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